

Healthy Families Indiana

Fact Sheet

What is Healthy Families?

Healthy Families Indiana is a voluntary home visitation program designed to promote healthy families and healthy children through a variety of services including child development, access to health care and parent education. Administered by the Family and Social Services Administration, Healthy Families Indiana is designed to strengthen families and promote healthy childhood growth and development. It is hoped that these efforts will help reduce child abuse and neglect, childhood health problems and juvenile delinquency. By working closely with hospital maternity wards, prenatal clinics, and other local agencies, Healthy Families systematically identifies families that could benefit from these education and support services either before or immediately after birth.

Beliefs:

- Parents are the best authority on determining their family's needs.
- All families have strengths which need to be recognized.
- Every child should reach his or her potential.
- Parents are responsible for their children.
- Available services should begin early to support the needs of the family.

What we do:

- Initiate services prenatally or postnatally continuing up to the age of five.
- Partner with families to support, enhance, and strengthen their well being.
- Help all families reach their highest potential.
- Provide services tailored to individual needs and goals.
- Offer trained family support worker in the home weekly, or as appropriate, to model, educate, and provide proven research-driven parenting information.
- Connect families to appropriate community resources and service organizations based on their expressed needs and concerns.
- Assist families to access appropriate health care.

Partnerships

Indiana has multiple partnerships in place to support and help improve efficiency among agencies and programs with similar interests. These partnerships are the essence of collaboration leading to successful initiatives in communities across the state.

What Are Characteristics of Indiana Sites?

- 56 sites serve families in all 92 Indiana counties.
- 15,111 assessments were done during the 2003 fiscal year.
- 50% of assessments are done prenatally.
- 14,378 families received home visiting services.
- Referrals are made by hospitals (37%); WIC (43%), other health/social service providers (20%).

Of those enrolled:

- 31% of parents were under age 20.
- 90% of children received age appropriate immunizations.
- 90% received well child visits.
- 72% of families had at least one employed parent.
- 20% of families had at least one parent enrolled in school or training.

Current partnerships include:

- First Steps Early Intervention Program
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- Early Head Start
- Head Start Memorandum of Understanding
- Office of Family and Children
- Maternal and Child Health
- Division of Mental Health
- Juvenile Justice Institute
- Hospitals

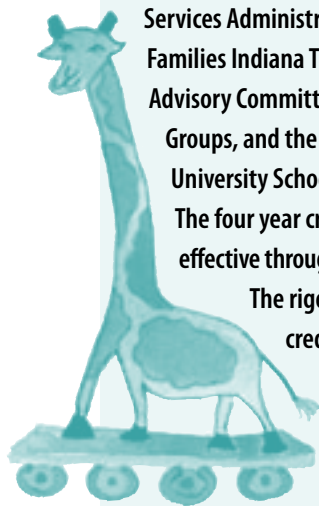


Healthy Families Indiana becomes recredentialed

On February 3, 2004, Healthy Families Indiana celebrated with a recognition ceremony at the State House Rotunda. Indiana is the first state in the nation to be awarded a second multi-site credential. Governor Joseph Kernan and Prevent Child Abuse America/Healthy Families America recognized 56 Healthy Families Indiana Sites, the Family and Social Services Administration, Healthy Families Indiana Think Tank Advisory Committee and Work Groups, and the Indiana University School of Nursing. The four year credential is effective through July 31, 2007.

The rigorous credentialing process ensures sites maintain an excellent standard of

service delivery to new parents consistent with the home visiting model developed by Healthy Families America—the national organization.



How Does Healthy Families Compare?

The growth of the Healthy Families Program throughout Indiana has been unprecedented. Currently, 56 Healthy Families Indiana sites are providing services to families and children in all 92 counties. Because of this extensive service, Indiana is widely recognized as a national model for the Healthy Families America initiative. In order to maintain support of Healthy Families rapid expansion, multi-level leadership from the public/private sector is critical to the program. The Healthy Families Indiana Think Tank fills that role.

The purpose of the Healthy Families Indiana Think Tank is to continue the tradition of broad-based consensus building to enhance and refine Healthy Families services to Indiana children and families and the processes that support this valuable program. A strong public, private and community partnership is vital to Healthy Families Indiana's continued growth and success.

Indiana has also gained national recognition for developing and implementing a high quality system for statewide training and technical assistance under a contract with Indiana University School of Nursing. In 2003 Healthy Families Indiana Training and Technical Assistance Project (HFI T&TAP) provided initial training for 229 newly hired HFI staff and advanced training for 930. In FY 2003, 1,755 participants attended 149 HFI T&TAP training events.



The Home Front

How do we know HFI is effective?

One of the main goals of HFI is to help families create a safe, nurturing environment for their children. The HOME Inventory measures the quality of the home environment. Based on a sample of 421 families, HOME scale scores improved significantly when families participated in HFI home visiting. When babies were 2-3 months old, 25% had low scores and 18% had high scores. By the time these same babies were 6 months old, only 9% had low scores and 41% had high scores. Scores improved significantly because parents were more receptive and involved, and home environments were more organized and stimulating. Analysis shows improvement in HOME scale scores is explained by the number of home visits that occurred between the 1st and 2nd HOME scale, not the length of time. The mother's Family Stress Checklist score was not a contributing factor. This indicates improvement in HOME scale scores can be attributed to participation in home visiting, regardless of the mother's level of risk. These improvements are much greater than could be expected without participation in HFI home visiting.

Analysis of HOME scale scores is part of IU School of Nursing's evaluation of Healthy Families Indiana, using Home Visiting Tracking Information System data from 2,245 children, born between January 1 and June 30, 1999, and enrolled in home visitation.